NEWFANGLES

Cartoon:
Jefferson Hamill

Number 31, February 1970. Monthly from Don & Maggie Thompson, 8786 Hendricks Rd., Mentor, Ohio 44060, for 10¢ a copy, 10 for $1, free copies for news, cartoons, title logos or other valuable considerations. Back issues (24 25 27-30) for 10¢ each. While your wallet is out, we have a few copies left of a checklist of Dell "special series" titles (plus some others) at $1, plus 10¢ for a planned corrections list; and How to Survive Comics Fandom at 20¢. Circulation of Newfangles this issue: 307.

No ad sheets again this month, but our giant cellar-cleaning sale will be back soon.

WEISINGER RETIRES: Mort Weisinger, editor of Superman, Superboy, Action, Adventure, Lois Lane, Jimmy Olsen and World's Finest Comics, is retiring. His books are to be divided among the other National-DC editors. Details when we get them. A full rundown probably will be in the next Comic Reader.

CIRCULATION figures are appearing (we need help on this: we never see the Archie, most DC, Charlton or Dennis the Menace books -- if you do, how about passing on the total avg. paid circulation figures?). In general, circulations are down for DC, holding pretty steady for Marvel, climbing for Charlton. We discern no trend for sure with Gold Key, but it seems to be downward. Superman lost 124,416 from the 1969-published figure; Batman is down 177,668; World's Finest is off 113,497; Tarzan is off 91,778; Jimmy Olsen lost 81,325. By remaining steady while others lost (down 951 from last year), Spider-Man has moved above World's Finest, Batman and Tarzan in circulation. More on this when we get more data. This is not the whole picture of a magazine's success or failure (publishers talk of "percentages," but that is not the whole story, either). Aquaman lost 28,343 last year and has circulation of 184,650, but DC is quite happy with the book and pleased with its sales. (HEY: We very much need complete-as-possible circulation figures for last year, too.)

Jerry Bails reports that a copy of the Collector's Guide was returned by the Post Office from Robert Burnworth of New Jersey marked "deceased." Can anyone confirm or deny?

BITS OF NEWS 1969's Christmas strip from NEA was "How Wyn Sock Saved Christmas" by Paul Gringle; King had "Walt Disney's Quest for Christmas." %% Canadian editorial cartoonist Duncan Macpherson has a new book: Macpherson's Canada. $24.50 (choke) and it can be ordered from Star Reader Service, P. O. Box 806, Adelaide Street P. O., Toronto 210, Ontario CANADA. Macpherson may be the world's finest political cartoonist--but $24.50? %% We understand that Gordolovers and beans with cheese admirers may get Gordo's recipe by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Gordo, Carmel, California 93921. With a request. %% Entertainment World (a trade weekly) had in its 5th issue (Oct 31) several articles on animation, including one on the computerization of animation. Price was 50¢; issues can probably be ordered from Entertainment World, 6548 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, California 90028. %% About 150 people gathered at various times Nov 30 in front of the SFChronicle offices to protest its dropping Dan O'Neill's Odd Bodkins Nov 2. A spokesman for pickets called the strip's discontinuance "probably political"; the paper said the strip was dropped for reasons of space. %% Fawcett has an 8½ x 5½ pb called Andy Capp Special ($1). %% Ch, the Chronicle restored Odd Bodkins.

TCR NEWS The Comic Reader (single copy 20¢; more 15¢@) from Mark Hanerfeld, The Academy, GPO Box 449, Flushing, New York 11352 is out again! #77 announces that next issue (due out Mar 3) will carry results of the 1969 Alley Awards Poll--fastest publishing of results in years, if he makes it. %% Jim Steranko has formed his own publishing company (Super Graphics, Box 445, Wyomissing, Pennsylvania 19610) to bring out his own books. First planned is The History of Comics--to be $1.98 and run about 80 pages. Planned for later is Talon--and maybe eventually his How to Draw for the Comics. %% Byron Priess, University of Pennsylvania, 241 Provost Smith, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104, will be/is teaching a course in comic books. %% Jim Warren has taken over editorship on Creepy, Eerie, and Vampirella. %% Titles on those two new two-character Marvels will be Amazing Adventures and Astonishing Tales. %% Firehair won't get his own book, but he'll be the lead feature in a new multiple-feature western comic edited by Kubert. %% Next in Showcase will be (cheer, all you Sekowsky fans!) Manhunter 2070, written, drawn, and edited by MS. %% Teen Titans will go to more than one story per issue. %% Deadman will appear in only #74 of Challengers of the Unknown--though it had been thought he might have a regular series in CotU. %% National has discontinued destroying original art; it now saves each precious piece and guards it well. Locking the barn door after the Golden Age art has been destroyed? (To mangle a metaphor...) %% Mark strongly suggests that all fans pick up a copy of Green Lantern #76 (Apr); we'll echo that.

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Locus #47 (sub 5/$1 from Charlie Brown, 2078 Anthony Avenue, Bronx, New York 10457) answers the question many have been asking, "What is Dr. Fredric Wertham doing, subscribing to fanzines?" Charlie reports an article in the December issue of The Twentieth Century Fund Newsletter: "Fanzines--amateur publications produced by adolescents that discuss comic strips, science fiction, sex, and the adult world--will be the subject for a Fund study under the direction of Fredric Wertham, a well-known psychiatrist. Dr. Wertham, who has been collecting these publications and studying this almost unknown sector of the underground press for many years hopes to produce a monograph that promises to be the first report on fanzines for either the academic or the general reader and is part of the Fund's continuing interest in both professional and amateur media. The study will examine the content of fanzines, describe their production, and attempt to draw conclusions from what they reveal about an important segment of the country's adolescent population. The result of the study, Dr. Wertham believes, can have a bearing on adolescent psychology, education, student unrest, sexual mores of youth, freedom of expression, obscenity, violence, political attitudes of youth, juvenile drug addiction, and the economics of amateur publishing." It seems obvious from this report, as well as from Wertham's past efforts, that a scientific investigation of various fandoms might produce interesting results--but that this investigation will not be the one to produce them. It might help if some investigator would keep an open mind until data is accumulated.

In a short time, we have received three chain letters, two involving a "Bill Needham" and an "Imperial Sales Company." "Up to $8,000" is promised if we continue the chain. Look, gang, chain letters are illegal swindles--and the next one we get goes to the Post Office. %% If you've been wondering why you can't get a Peanuts original, try writing William L. Anderson, United Feature Syndicate, 220 East 42nd Street, New York, New York 10017 special delivery just after you see the strip you like in the newspaper. They average more than 50 requests for every Peanuts strip printed. %% Sesame Street fans can get the six issues of PARENT/TEACHER GUIDE TO SESAME STREET for $2; write Children's Television Workshop, Box 9140, St. Paul, Minnesota 55177. Three have already appeared, illustrated by Jack Davis. %% The publishers of Good Old Days are starting a new publication, The Roaring Twenties, which will have "features, photos, cartoons, poems, songs, drawings, memories of the spectacular...'Roaring Twenties.'" Regular price of $4 a year (6 issues); special $3 a year introductory rate to House of White Birches, Inc., P. O. Box 337, Seabrook, New Hampshire 03874.

MIKE BARRIER, STAR REPORTER, REPORTS: Newsweek (Nov 3) has a story about New York's Whitney Museum showing (87 artists, 187 works), "Human Concern/Personal Torment." Among Rico Lebrun, the Hairy Who, and Willem de Kooning, is Robert Crumb --"a superb draftsman and cutting satirist," according to Newsweek. %% The Arkansas Gazette (Dec 30) reported the existence of a sexy Italian swashbuckling heroine of the comics, "the hottest publishing product in Italy today." The first issue of her adventures, Isabella #1, was published in 1966 and reportedly sells for over $160. Her tribulations are supposedly based on French fictional accounts of the Duchess of Frissac, but her weekly adventures have little to do with the real woman. Now, there is talk of an opera being written about Isabella. "It is known that the main character will combine the good of 'Madame Butterfly,' the bad of 'Carmen,' and the pomp of 'Aida.'" Whatever that means... %% Mike's clippings tell us that for the first 10 shows of this TV season, The Wonderful World of Disney has averaged a Nielsen rating of 23, its highest in 6 years--and its share of the TV audience in that time slot has been 38.9%, the highest in Disney's 9 years on NBC. WD's people are working as far ahead as the 1972-3 TV season. Exec producer Ron Miller says, "When you have a show that combines animals and comedy...then you can't lose." %% Newsweek says the newest hit among the heads is the recently rereleased Fantasia, which is really pulling in money for the first time (in "In" territories). Apparently, crowds are coming in pretty stoned and leaving moreso. %% Among Sesame Street cartoon producers are Fred Calvert (currently working on an 80-minute animated Don Quixote budgeted at $1,700,000--and having his first profitable year with gross business of $500,000) and Chuck Jones.

JIM WARREN NEWS A proposed magazine titled Bodé (to feature work of Vaughn B) is now an abandoned project. It was considered, but fell through. %% John Fantucchio finished his first professional comics work--and it will appear in Creepy #33 (on sale March 10). %% Bill Harris, who edited Creepy and Eerie between Goodwin and Parente, has taken over the letter- and fan-pages of Creepy, Eerie, and Vampirella. %% Two new mags from the Warren stable to bow this spring and summer: Warren says, "They both promise to be exciting & expensive.... (But worth it!)"

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Hey, Film Fans! 56 years of film reviews (over 16,000 of them) from The New York Times are now available--arranged chronologically in 5 volumes, fully indexed. Films from 1913 to 1968 are covered. It will cost $395 when published in March--but orders before March 1 can order it for a mere $345. Write (now) The New York Times/Library Services and Information Division, Dept. EP-12, 229 West 43rd Street, New York, New York 10036. %% The Nostalgia Book Club, 525 Main Street, New Rochelle, New York 10801, is two years old and has just reached 10,000 membership. If interested, just write and they'll send you membership information. %% Parade magazine reported in December that the Conservative Book Club just held an opinion survey to find the world's leading conservative; it mentioned that the CBC publishes books under the name Arlington House, pres of the CBC is Neil McCaffrey. (NBC has books from AH; its pres is NMcC.) (Barry Goldwater won the poll; Al Capp was rated #26.)

REVIEWS:

PRELIMINARY NOTE: Most of the books mentioned here can be ordered from Edward R. Hamilton, Bookseller, PO Box 1023, Danbury, Conn. 06810 at substantial savings -- for instance, the $12.50 Buck Rogers book costs only $8.58 from Hamilton, including postage and handling. Write for order forms, there is no membership fee. This is not a plug for Hamilton, it is a service to our readers; this is a good deal. Don't order until you get the proper forms, though. Most books available at 33 1/3% discount.

The Collected Works of Buck Rogers in the 25th Century, edited by Robert C. Dille, Chelsea House, $12.50 (or $8.58; see above). As that campy title should tell you, this is a fastbuck enterprise, printing an incredible number of strips but starting stories in the middle, ending them before the end, jumping aimlessly about from old to new to old and deadening the senses of the reader. Truth to tell, Buck Rogers isn't that good under the best of circumstances. The art, particularly that of Rick Yager, is foul. For the dedicated collector or student only -- and don't pay full price; it's not worth $8.58.

R Crumb's Fritz the Cat, Ballantine Books $2.95. This large (10 x 13) paperback should be bought by anyone who has wondered what the fuss about Crumb is all about. This is his best work (he seems to feel he has Gone Beyond It now but has actually got in a rut --pun intended--with sex as his subject) and it is what people are talking about. If you don't like this, you really don't like Crumb. Fine comment, wry humor, good art. Crumb is one of the few cartoonists today to lay out a page as a chapter or paragraph, plotting his work as few besides Barks have done since the EC days.

The Phantom by Lee Falk & Ray Moore, Nostalgia Press, PO Box 293, Franklin Square, NY 11010, $6. This paperbound, handsomely printed book contains a complete 1938 adventure, "The Prisoner of the Himalayas," the fifth Phantom story to appear. Why not start with the first? This is a good, though overlong, story with nice humorous touches. If you like the Phantom, you should like this. Much better than current Phantom stories.

Kiss, Screw, Pleasure and Sex, compiled by William Teach, Greenleaf, $4.75. Warning: If you admit existence of dirty books at all, this is a dirty book, with obscene drawings, writings and photographs. If you still want it, send your money to Greenleaf Classics, 3511 Camino Del Rio South, San Diego, Calif. 92120. But don't come crying to us about its contents or that your parents caught you with it or whatever. It is a serious study of three sex-oriented NY papers (their titles form the first three words of this book's title) and it is written for a salacious audience -- but also for those who really want a serious book on the subject. This has more redeeming social import than 99% of all books published, "clean" or "dirty." Of interest to us, especially, is a serious and knowledgeable discussion of the underground comix with samples of their work. This book is recommended highly, with cautions already noted. Incidentally, Playboy will be running a superficial article on the undergrounders this year; at least, we assume it will be superficial from the fact that the author is asking questions like a man who does not know his topic. Too bad they didn't commission Teach, instead. No minors.

The Mad Book of Magic and Other Dirty Tricks by Al Jaffee, Signet, 60¢ is the latest book of original material from the Madmen and, except for Sergio Aragones' Viva Mad, possibly, the funniest. Only one minor complaint: I think Mad's books should have serious introductions, not just gag intros. But buy the book (edited by Jerry De Fuccio with a gag introduction by the otherwise admirable Nick Meglin). It's funny.

The Oliphant Book by Pat Oliphant, Simon & Schuster, $5.95 (or $4.08; see above). This is the first collection of America's secondbest political cartoonist (best is Ron Cobb; world's best is Canada's Duncan Macpherson). Oliphant is probably handsdown the funniest political cartoonist around and this book contains some of his best work to date.

George Herriman's Krazy Kat, Madison Square Press/Grosset & Dunlap, $7.95 from Nostalgia Press (see address with Phantom review). This is the only KK book out, published for Nostalgia by G&D. Herriman was the greatest and any KK collection should be bought and cherished, but this collection is far from what it should be. We summarize from a carefully-thought-out 6-page review by Bill Blackbeard in his CAPA-alpha publication, Journal of the Vigilant Fraternity of Bonded Mousehood #8 (the title comes from Krazy Kat, incidentally): "The minimum contents one might have expected to find in this book: (1) an arrangement of the strip selections in simple chronological order; (2) the printing of each episode's original date of appearance with it; (3) a full selection of historically and sequentially relevant episodes from the strip's start; (4) accompanying selection of as many of the most visually striking and poetically imaginative pieces as would be necessary to make up the bulk of the book; (5) eight of the numerous instances of markedly effective use of color and design in the Sunday pages; and (6) a four or five page appendix with daily and Sunday examples of other Herriman strips. But the book was not so handled. Instead of the obvious, easy and excellent book which might have been produced, we have been tossed a garish novelty-counter number. Moreover, the editors have wantonly wasted space with large blank areas and badly-done modernday drawings of Herriman's characters -- one of the eight color pages is wasted. The reader has been skinned out of no less than 330 daily episodes (or 28 Sunday pages) which the presently vacant yellow swamps of this book's pages could easily have held. That is, more than are actually to be found in it. Worst of all, this grievous atrocity of a book is likely to be the only means by which tens of thousands of young people are going to encounter Krazy Kat for another quarter of a century." (Buy the book, anyway. It's not what it should have been, but it's the only game in town.)

Our Fighting Forces #124, Apr 70. Skip the cover-featured story by Robert One-Note Kanigher, it's a loser. But buy this issue for "Parable," an intelligent story by Jerry De Fuccio, illustrated by John Severin. It's the best thing to appear in any war comic since EC was foully murdered. If you like the run of DC war crap where one GI knocks out 3 machinegun nests, 2 tanks, an airplane and a Nazi rifle squad within 6 pages, you won't like this. Editors (Kubert, at least) will buy good stuff if it's offered them; maybe writers are to blame for the garbage we've been getting? Support the good stuff; buy this issue of OFF. EC fans need it to keep their files complete.

Collector's Guide: The First Heroic Age, Jerry Bails, PO Box 7499, Northend Station, Detroit, Michigan 48202, $5. This is an attempt to list all costumed-and-super-hero strips appearing 1934-1947 in comic books, following them beyond that date to the end of their runs. It lists each character with a strip and in what and when the stories ran. From Air Man to Zudo the Jungle Boy, you can find the publishing histories of such characters as The Secret Stamp; Nadir, Master of Magic; Marvo 1,2GO/, the Super Boy of the Year 2680; and Astron, Crocodile Queen. This is a mammoth reference work, on permanent, coated stock. It has pictures of rare comics covers in addition to other data. The serious fan/collector cannot be without it.

Alter Ego #10, Roy Thomas, 305 E. 86th St., Apt. 18K-West, NYC 10028, $1.50. Years in the making, but well worth the wait. The Gil Kane interview (one of the most beautifully laid out articles we've seen) and its accompanying Marie Severin cover more than earn the price. As a bonus, you get 2 Wally Wood/Roy Thomas parodies, material on Phil Seuling and comics cons, several pages of Kubert's stillborn Tor newspaper strip, a defense of censorship by Leonard Darvin and a copy of the Comics Code (you'd all do well to read the illiterate thing) and a humor piece on the "deaths" of Jim Steranko and Paul McCartney. Highly recommended. Actually, the Code is not illiterate, but it does contain some plonking grammar errors: "In every instance good shall triumph over evil and the criminal punished for his misdeeds" is the way our copy of the Code reads. I note Roy's version cleans up the errors, possibly someone gave the Codesters a fifth-grade grammar book or maybe Roy (his English teacher blood boiling) polished it. We wonder which. Buy Alter Ego anyway. And read the Code.

**Bulletin: The Pogo TV special will be rerun in February; dolls are again available with some Procter & Gamble products in most areas.

OBITUARIES

Jack Miller died Jan 9. For years he was editor and writer for the DC romance comics, and Strange Adventures #205 (the debut issue for Deadman) was under his editorial hand. He took over scripting Deadman's adventures, and it was he and Neal Adams who made the strip one of fandom's favorites. Our contact with him was only brief, but he was kind and helpful to us. We'll miss him.

Dave Breger died Jan 17, at the age of 61; according to Newsweek, his death was the result of an automobile accident. "G. I. Joe" as a term for the American enlisted man was his invention--and the title of the strip he did for Yank. Breger sold his first cartoons in 1937 and was an established cartoonist by WWII; after the war, Private Breger metamorphosed into Mr. Breger. Breger also edited a very interesting anthology, But That's Unprintable!, on the mores of cartooning.

William Donahey, age 86, died Feb 1 in Chicago. He went there in 1914 and began drawing his creation, The Teenie Weenies, for the Chicago Tribune-New York News Syndicate. He drew his last strip in Nov 1969--the final strip will appear Feb 15.

CoA: Richard O'Brien, 173 Midland Avenue, Montclair, New Jersey 07042
Bill Brown, 4308 NE Douglas Way, Vancouver, Washington 98662
David M. Gorman, 4022 A-3 Meadows Drive, Indianapolis, Indiana 46205

We hear from Sweden (!) that Carl Barks wrote two stories during December. The first was about the Junior Woodchucks' efforts to save a beached whale; the second was about a contest between two troops of the JWW (to rescue circus people from a distant airplane wreck). Barks did not handle art. %% Jack Kirby pencilled two large Toys for Tots posters. The one with Thor on it he inked; the other, with Cap America and a Marine Sgt on it, Mike Royer inked. %% Fan Buddy Saunders wrote "All Sewed Up" --which will appear in an upcoming Eerie, illustrated by Mike Royer. %% We hear word that Shaw-Barton, Coshocton, Ohio prints a 1970 calendar reprinting (in full color) 9" x 9" old J. R. Williams "Bull of the Woods" Out Our Way cartoons. %% The forthcoming Mad annual, designated "Special," will have 16 pages of original material. The bonus will be a voodoo doll which can be constructed and impaled with hex tags. The doll was designed by Paul Nonnast (an illustrator for the old SatEve Post). %% AENeuman will be joining the Butch Cassidy "family portrait" on an upcoming cover--with the flavor of the (very successful) Bonnie & Clyde cover. Preceeding that will be Jack Davis' all-motorcycle cover on the issue featuring "Sleazy Riders." %% Didja note that Mad (unlike virtually all other comics) plussed in circulation in 1969--upping 1968 circulation by 52,854?

NEWFANGLES 31 -- Your sub ends with # trade .

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